In vitro fertilization technique receives patent

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Last December CIRM grantee Renee Reijo Pera spoke to the CIRM governing board about her work identifying which in vitro fertilization embryos were most likely to result in a successful pregnancy (you can watch that video here). That work has resulted in a patent to Stanford University, with an exclusive license to Menlo Park-based Auxogyn, which was founded by Pera and her colleagues at Stanford.

In the video of her talk, Pera shows several IVF embryos formed in the lab by fusing human sperm and eggs. By videotaping those embryos and watching them develop, she can tell by day two which are going to be ready to implant in a woman's uterus, a step that normally happens on day five.

Pera has a long-standing interest in the earliest stages of human development, where she says many common diseases may originate. During her talk, Pera, who is director of Stanford's Center for Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research and Education, said:

> "I can't believe the progress we've made in the past years with human embryonic stem cells and embryology. We have unprecedented tools to understand human development and we can begin to understand basic questions like where does sporadic disease come from in the population."

This new technology has the potential to help infertile couples successfully conceive children through in vitro fertilization. Having a patent on the technology also creates jobs and tax revenue in California -- one of the great benefits of having a thriving biotechnology community in the state.

Pera has a CIRM Comprehensive Award and a New Cell Lines Award.

Tags: Reijo Pera, Stanford University